Report of the New York City Tech Campus Information Support Task Force

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Submitted by
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INTRODUCTION

The CUL NYC Tech Campus Information Support Task Force was convened by the University Librarian to define the library service needs of the NY Tech Campus now and moving forward as the programs at the campus expand and evolve. The full charge is in Appendix 1.

The Task Force primarily focused on planning for services and resources for the NYC Tech Campus as it moves to its permanent location on Roosevelt Island, which will begin in 2017 and scheduled to be completed by 2037. The Task Force also took into consideration current needs for service.

INPUT FROM STAKEHOLDERS

The Task Force began by working with Anne Kenney, Cathy Dove and Dan Huttenlocher to identify stakeholders to interview (See Appendix 2). The initial stakeholders identified included administrators, faculty and staff at the Tech Campus, as well as the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management, Technion's Library, Cornell Information Technology, and the USPTO representative from the Department of Commerce. We also met with CIT's Claire van den Blink about their current support strategy.

In our discussions with stakeholders, we focused on understanding user needs in order to best prepare for the types of services and resources the Tech Campus will need moving forward. The conversations emphasized the importance of creating virtual services for the campus itself and reinforced connections between the Tech Campus and the Ithaca Campus. As with other support functions, the need for virtual access is clear as the Tech Campus’s culture presupposes unique service expectations and space needs. From CIT we learned that they, too, are for the present in a practical and tactical support mode in terms of service needs with a plan to grow these as needed. CIT is trying to follow the model in which the Tech Campus people are actually on the Ithaca campus.

VISION AND OPPORTUNITIES

In speaking to all the faculty that had come on board at the time for the Tech Campus they were unanimous in their expectation that they will have full access to all library materials and services that are available in Ithaca. This expectation matches the University’s and Library’s Strategic Plans to have one Library for one Cornell. The faculty research crosses a wide range of disciplinary boundaries not limited to computer science and management. Their Ph.D. students will have the same needs from the library. We do not know exactly what the needs of the M.Eng, and MBA students will be but we will grow the services and collections as needed. From the limited data we have on M.Eng. and MBA students in Ithaca it appears to us they are active users of the library’s collections and services.
We expect there will be some small traffic of physical materials for things that are not available online but we will accommodate any requests as needed (to date there have been none). For the larger commercial publishers we do not expect significant problems in our licensing agreements since we have been working with them to accept the concept of “One Cornell” that includes Ithaca, Weill, Geneva, Cornell in Washington, etc. There will be details to work out and some additional charges when the campus is established on Roosevelt Island in 2017 and the total student/faculty population grows. From our past experience scholarly societies (e.g. IEEE, ACM, AMS, APS and most others) and some specialized publishers and services (such as Bloomberg) will see the Tech Campus as an additional geographically separate site. Consequently, we expect significant additional costs and difficult negotiations. These negotiations will need to be well underway at least one year before 2017. To date we have minimal use data for Tech Campus faculty and students partially because of the small numbers and especially because their network identifications and IP addresses are appearing to our vendors of licensed resources as if they are on the Ithaca campus.

From our experience, we know that most library services can be delivered virtually. But we have learned that this works best if users are acquainted with the library staff member “on the other end of the line.” We also know that some services such as liaison services, research assistance, consultations, information literacy instruction, and scholarly communications support are better delivered, or at least initiated, in person, in the classroom or over the phone. We will be highly virtual but also personal when appropriate. We will grow our Tech Campus services as needed and in conjunction with the Tech Campus idiom and entrepreneurial culture.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE TASK FORCE

The Task Force’s recommendations below are based on a set of guiding principles established from the beginning but reinforced as we developed our shared understanding of the needs of the Tech Campus. First and foremost, the philosophy of library service for all of the libraries at Cornell is shaped by the “One Cornell-One Library” principle. Students and faculty of the Tech Campus should have access to all Library resources that any other student or faculty member can access. Second, this is an opportunity to shape a new model of library service, which would be more virtual and more personal. We worked under the assumption that we would not build a “just in case” physical collection at the Tech campus and that there would be no designated physical space for a library.

Since the nature of the Tech Campus will be evolving over the next several years and perhaps even more significantly over the next several decades, any plan put in place today must be continually reviewed and adjusted based on the realities of the evolving programs, changing makeup of the student body, and ever-changing faculty research needs. In proposing the following recommendations,
we have attempted to incorporate these key principles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After this one-year study of the library resources and services needs of the developing NY Tech Campus, this committee recommends:

1) The current committee be discharged and;

2) A new team is put into place for 2 years for CY 2014 and CY 2015 to:
   a) monitor and serve the library resource and information needs of the Tech Campus community and
   b) make recommendations for the library presence in 2016 and beyond when the campus is moved to Roosevelt Island, projected for 2017.

We think the library can absorb these personnel costs with existing resources for this time period. We recommend the team have access to a $3,000 per year travel budget.

All requests for library materials during this two-year period through FY16 will be considered using the same methods as those on the Ithaca campus.

With this team in place the Task Force believes that the Library will be able to meet library resource needs and serve both general orientation and ongoing needs of both students and faculty for this two year time period, while at the same time establishing a virtual library presence and analyzing and planning for library services from 2016 onward. The team will be responsible for documenting its time and any costs it incurs. Additional costs will be documented and any new resources or services will be considered as they arise during this two-year period.
APPENDIX 1: TASK FORCE CHARGE

The Cornell University Library NYC Tech Campus Information Support Task Force began its work in December 2012 and was charged to:

1. Identify and work with all the stakeholders involved in the development and launch of NYC Tech Campus, including IT@Cornell, faculty, WCMC, the NYC team (Cathy Dove, Dan Huttenlocher), and others (e.g., the Department of Commerce, information professionals from Technion),

2. In conjunction with the stakeholders, define the kind of services and digital resources the Cornell University Library will need to provide in order to support the information, research, and teaching needs of the faculty and students associated with the NYC Tech Campus,

3. Project the financial resources (library materials, staffing, etc.) that will be needed to provide these services,

4. Identify additional issues that may result from the partnership with Technion or commercial interests associated with the NYC Tech Campus,

5. Propose an organizational structure that will succeed this task force within the CUL Library and IT@Cornell to represent the ongoing needs of the NYC Tech Campus.

The committee membership was composed of the following: John Saylor (Chair), Colleen Cuddy (replaced by Drew Wright) Bill Kara, Jesse Koenecke, Janet McCue (until June 2013), Holly Mistlebauer, Mary Ochs, Steve Rockey, Neely Tang, Carol Epstein (CULAC representative)
APPENDIX 2: STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

Cornell NYC Tech

Sarah Abdelnour – Student Services Associate

Cathy Dove – Vice President

Deborah Estrin – Professor of Computer Science at Tech Campus and Professor of Public Health at Weill Cornell Medical College

Craig Gotsman – Director, Jacobs Technion-Cornell Innovation Institute

Dan Huttenlocher – Dean and Vice Provost

Rajit Manohar – Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at Tech Campus and Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Sue Purvis – Outreach Coordinator, United States Patent and Trademark Office

Johnson Graduate School of Management

Doug Stayman – Associate Dean for MBA Programs

Wes Sine – J. Thomas Clark Professor of Entrepreneurship and Personal Enterprise

College of Engineering

Hod Lipson - Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and Director of Creative Machines Lab.

Cornell Information Technology

Claire van den Blink

Tried but did not connect with:

Technion Library