

Library Council

Wednesday, April 8, 2026

9:00 AM, 311G and Zoom

Library Council Present: Chad Buckley, Colby Cilento, Carrie Forbes, Ellie Harman, Logan Janicki, Jayna Leipart Guttilla, Jennifer Sharkey, Lindsey Skaggs, Chris Worland

Agenda

I. Call to Order

Chair Lindsey Skaggs called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

II. Approval of Minutes from 3/25/26 Library Council Meeting

Library Council approved the 3/25/26 meeting minutes.

III. Public Comments

Chair Skaggs noted that no members of the public registered to speak.

IV. Discussion Items

A. Hiring Practices

Chair Skaggs explained this was a continuation of discussion from the March 11 Library Council (LC) meeting. When discussing the prioritization of positions to hire for the next fiscal year, discussion veered into the stickier topics of differences between classifications. Interest was expressed in continuing to discuss hiring practices as well as hiring priorities. Feedback was solicited from library faculty and staff. After that meeting, there were concerns expressed about the announced hiring of a temporary outreach librarian, and how that hire may have departed from prior precedent.

Dean Carrie Forbes noted that Chair Skaggs was a very good advocate for LC and the library. She met with Skaggs about this, who provided her with a list of questions she had received about hiring practices. She read the questions and provided answers as follows:

Can we hire interim positions as appointments instead of conducting a search?:

- Yes, appointments for interim or temporary positions are common practice across campus. There have been some cases where multiple internal candidates expressed interest in interim appointments, so searches have been conducted. For external appointments, there are references and background checks conducted. Human Resources (HR) also reviews their curriculum vitae (CV) to make sure they match the job requirements.

Is the Outreach Librarian appointment really an interim position?

- Yes, there are multiple versions of non-tenure track faculty (NTT) contracts; some are renewable, and some are not. Non-renewal NTT contracts are not very common but can be used for temporary appointments. The contract for this position is a non-renewal contract for a one-year term. There is very specific wording in the letter which says that

this position may or may not move forward as a permanent position, but if it did move forward, it would be open for applications.

Why was the Outreach Librarian selected for this temporary appointment, rather than the Student Success Librarian or another position?

- Outreach and student success are the positions she has received the most feedback on about the great need for those positions to be filled. A Student Success Librarian would not be easy to hire in a temporary capacity because it was previously a tenure-track faculty (TT) position.

What is the university's spousal/partner hire policy? Is this a spousal/partner hire?

- There is not one, so there are no guarantees. There are some informal practices regarding this across campus, and after asking around, it is common. This is sort of a spousal hire, but it was not something guaranteed in a contract; it was more of an ask. The provost has to approve spousal/partner hires and has specific guidelines for doing so. There has to be a vacant position and salary available to cover it. The job vacancy also has to be a match for the candidate's experience.

Dean Forbes explained that she wanted to help the library with this appointment. She noted she was perhaps naïve about some of the traumatic history in the library regarding hiring practices and classifications. She apologized for the timing of the hiring announcement. She also noted she was asked if Michelle Neuffer and Jennifer Sharkey, who were mentioned in the hiring announcement email, knew about it beforehand. They did not know about the hire but had been helpful in previous conversations about what to do with the outreach and student success positions.

Chris Worland noted that the NTT caucus discussed this and was very surprised by the announcement because the week prior LC had been discussing position priorities. They did not know that hiring interim NTTs was even an option. He noted this position requires a lot of relationship building, so they were questioning how much someone in a temporary role could accomplish in that respect.

Dean Forbes shared that she had a good conversation with Director of Marketing and Communications Michelle Neuffer about that as well. This is a relationship building position, but the temporary coverage is intended to help cover some events, outreach activities, and tabling. It won't be a deep dive into big new initiatives initially. She asked if there was support for hiring interim NTTs in the future or if that would be something that may not be supported.

Ellie Harman stated that the lack of previous communication was something that came up in conversations about this hire.

Jayna Leipart Guttilla stated it was important to have a foundational understanding of what a temporary position would do, for the continuity of the future work. In terms of ongoing interim hiring, there was a need to be careful about what the purpose of a temporary position would be.

Colby Cilento explained she had heard concerns about the position not being advertised or going through a search, such as when Tom Hardy was hired into an interim librarian position. There may have been some internal interest in this position as well. Other feedback she received was concerns about the transparency of this being a spousal hire, and the library not having been provided with a CV or further information about the appointment.

Logan Janicki stated that this situation would not have happened without the hiring of a new Associate Dean (AD) of Information Assets (IA). Most of us don't even know why that was necessary still. The new AD and his wife will unfortunately likely have a harder time at Milner than they need to because all we have had to go on is rumors and hearsay.

Chad Buckley noted that Milner had spouses on staff together in the past.

Chair Skaggs explained that sometimes it felt like feedback was sought when the decision had already been made. Now with the Open Meetings Act (OMA) being complied with, it felt like it was harder for everyone to have a say in shared governance. She noted other feedback about hiring practices was received, so she wanted to move on to the priorities.

B. Hiring Priorities for FY 27

Chair Skaggs explained that she received feedback from a mix of classifications. The positions that ranked most highly in the feedback she received were the Student Success Librarian, Discovery Services Librarian, Head of Special Collections (and possibly Archives), an additional position for the Digitization Center, and part-time administration help. When discussing with the TT caucus, they felt that the Student Success Librarian and Head of Special Collections positions should be filled in the TT line. They also thought the Discovery Services Librarian position should ideally be filled this year.

Janicki expressed strong support from the e-resources team for hiring a Discovery Services Librarian position.

Leipart Guttilla noted that in discussions about that position, there was a question of the classification and whether it should be hired as an NTT or civil service (CS) program coordinator position. The distinction should be heavily considered based on the work and collaboration for that role, as well as where it will fall department-wise. Will it be a technical services position or outside? She and both Electronic Resources Librarians are all CS program coordinators. What does that mean if we aren't hiring more of those types of positions, and equally what does it mean if it is hired as NTT or CS.

Cilento noted that she also received similar feedback. She read other feedback she received about positions mentioned under consideration:

- The Discovery Services Librarian position is very important and should be a hiring priority.
- The outreach position did not necessarily need to be a librarian, and could potentially be advertised to be hired as CS and given a librarian title if the successful candidate had a library master's degree, or a coordinator title if not, similar to what was done previously with the Digital Scholarship Coordinator position when it was filled.
- The outreach position could potentially report to Neuffer or be part of a unit that included Neuffer and an eventual Student Success Librarian.
- Regarding outreach, that position could potentially be combined with the administrative support position, which was envisioned as part-time. It could make sense for the outreach position to be involved in some of the support tasks that were discussed for that position, such as coordinating with candidates in searches.
- Don't hire a Student Success Librarian or Digital Scholarship position if there is not a dedicated plan to support those roles; they both require significant resources.

Chair Skaggs noted she also heard feedback about potentially combining outreach with administrative support. She addressed Leiptart Guttilla's comments. How will it be determined what librarian positions should be TT, NTT, or CS? This has felt arbitrary in the past. There was a mention at the previous LC discussion about not hiring CS librarians anymore.

Dean Forbes has generally received feedback that librarians should have faculty status so that leaves the TT or NTT classifications for those positions. There are currently some librarians and individuals in positions requiring Master of Library Science (MLS) degrees in CS positions. If we agree that librarians should have faculty status, that doesn't mean we can't hire CS roles, but we would need to not require the MLS for those positions. If we hire CS with the librarian title, it chips away at whether librarians need to be faculty at all.

Dean Forbes explained there were a couple of factors at play. Discussions with HR about classifications were ongoing. She did not also know what the individual preferences were, how many CS would want to be faculty if the opportunity was available. CS positions had more standard hours and benefits. She used to work with a lot of young graduates who wanted to work in academic libraries but had no interest in conducting scholarship. Milner has not been consistent in the past with these position classifications, and that is a problem she is unsure about how to address or undo. If she had her way, she would convert those positions to NTTs if the individuals wanted it, and she would ideally want NTTs to have multi-year contracts. That is still something she is talking to HR about. The whole CS classification system is very strict.

Chair Skaggs shared additional feedback she received:

- Don't hire any positions without a salary review. There is salary disparity in the library that could be addressed and should be before deciding how to use any salary variance.
- Who would be the administrative coordinator for these positions under consideration? There are some, like Eric Willey, who have a lot of reports already, and adding another (like Discovery Services) would be challenging.
- A lot of advocating for the Discovery Services position

Dean Forbes noted she had flagged some positions of concern, either because the salary was low, or the individual in the position had been here for a long time, and their salary wasn't in line. She unfortunately cannot redistribute salary variance. She cannot give a raise to a non-union employee without HR, and merit raises are not supported, so salary modifications are only possible in very specific circumstances. For hourly CS employees, there was potentially an opportunity for reclassification, but it was evaluated on an individual basis and was a complicated process with the CS classification system. The Library Operations Associate classification, for example, has a low band on the pay scale, which she would like to see moved up.

Dean Forbes has a more long-term hope to raise the salary of everyone in those classifications, and provide out of cycle pay increases for those that take on considerably more work or are paid below the market value, but that is generally only an option for CS individuals that are not in a union. There are layers to all this that impact the ability to grant raises. She is still having ongoing discussions with HR.

Chad Buckley supported advocating to the provost or president for across the board raises for those not covered by unions.

Chair Skaggs shared additional comments she received about CS classified positions:

- There is a lack of opportunities for those in CS. HR does not approve of professional development falling outside the scope of responsibilities.
- Frustration with CS positions as currently written and the boundaries around them.
- Internal CS are viewed unfavorably when applying for NTT or TT positions; they do not have service or scholarship opportunities in their roles which gets held against them and finds external candidates fresh out of library school being viewed more favorably.
- There is no upward mobility for CS.

Dean Forbes agreed with those comments. It's difficult to move classifications. Please continue to bring these concerns up, when possible, through LC or other avenues. Some of this is due to the state CS classification system. In strategic planning, there has been some good conversations about potential things that could be done at Milner, not to change the CS system, but to provide other opportunities for CS employees, such as reforming the travel policy, internal grants that anyone can apply for, or potentially building skillsets to make CS employees more competitive for future jobs.

Chair Skaggs referenced the tensions with hiring different classifications of librarians. She noted that she also received a question about how this is communicated to candidates for positions. At one point, we were told no more NTTs would be hired, but then NTTs positions were posted. She has heard that some candidates were told all the classifications of librarian were treated the same but then when they came in, they saw that was not the case. How do we make it explicit about what the differences are? Especially now that TT faculty have changed their workload percentages to have 65% librarianship and higher scholarship and service requirements.

Chair Skaggs recapped that the following positions received the most support as hiring priorities based on the feedback provided:

- Discovery Services Librarian
- Head of Special Collections (and possibly Archives)
- Student Success Librarian
- Digitization Center support position
- Part-time administrative support position
- Accessibility position

Leipart Guttilla noted she had an upcoming retirement in her department. She explained that the work of that position would need to be continued. How do we guarantee that work gets performed outside of additional pay or incentives?

Dean Forbes explained we could move forward with filling that position since we knew it would be vacated. In terms of additional pay, that is an option for Leipart Guttilla or someone helping cover that role; or an extra help position could potentially be hired to fill in. Additional pay is much more likely to get approved if it can be proved that the individual is doing a different kind of work or higher work outside of their usual responsibilities.

Worland asked about the timeline to put positions forward; whereby, Dean Forbes explained that requests for TT positions were due June 1. She would want to put those forward and know which were approved or not because that would determine if some or any NTT or CS positions

needed to be reconsidered. There is some flexibility for some positions if the classification is clearer. The positions will need to start after July 1 for the next fiscal year.

Worland asked what questions LC or the caucuses may need to consider.

Dean Forbes summarized the positions Skaggs had mentioned. She believed that five or six positions could be hired, depending on the classifications. She would put forth two positions for TT lines. There was conversation about having the discovery position move forward as NTT or CS.

V. Celebratory Items

Chair Skaggs shared that Nursing Librarian Laura Killingsworth received the Association of Health Information Professionals certification from the Medical Library Association.

Chair Skaggs shared that Digitization Center Coordinator Karmine Beecroft was profiled in *Redbird Impact* as the Spring 2026 Campus Hero.

Chair Skaggs shared that Data and Social Services Librarian Chad Kahl received the 2026 Faculty Civic Engagement Award.

VI. Announcements/Other

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Skaggs at 10:00 a.m.

Submitted by C. Cilento

16 April 2026