



Date: May 5, 2009

To: Physics Department Students, Faculty and Staff

From: Lizabeth A. Wilson, Dean
University Libraries

In January of this year I appointed the Task Force on New Models of Service Delivery. The Task Force completed its work on April 24, 2009. The Task Force was asked to recommend changes to Libraries service models that would better support current and emerging user needs in the most cost-effective manner. A critical component of the charge was to recommend which service points within the University Libraries (Seattle campus) could be merged into larger units, reconfigured or discontinued. After careful review of available data, lively debate and much careful thought, the Task Force has submitted its recommendations.

One of the libraries which will be consolidated is the Physics- Astronomy Library.

The actual consolidation will take place over the summer with most of the materials from this library moving into the Suzzallo and Allen Libraries and course reserves managed by the Odegaard Undergraduate Library. While I know this is likely to be unwelcome news, I want to assure you that your librarian, Pam Yorks, will remain the liaison to the Physics Department and will continue to be actively engaged in meeting the information needs of the students and faculty.

While the current budget situation has perhaps accelerated the rate of change, the Libraries has long identified the establishment of fewer, more consolidated service locations with electronic distribution of many services to the desktop as a key strategic direction. At the same time, we must create the capacity within our organization to deliver new services needed by our community of users. Our goal with the proposed transformation of our physical collections and facilities is to provide enhanced access to the resources and services provided by the Libraries.

We know from our stores of usage data that **faculty** in disciplines with a high percentage of content available online – e.g., sciences, engineering, and health sciences in particular – are infrequent users of our physical facilities. We know that **students** in these fields tend to use our library spaces not to access resources but as study and collaboration spaces. We also know that the most heavily used library resource for **both faculty and students** is the virtual library: our presence on the web is our busiest service point. We are reshaping our physical facilities and virtual presence to respond to this reality.

We look forward to seeing Physics students in other libraries on campus, including the Odegaard Undergraduate Library with its large information commons and extended hours of opening and in the Suzzallo and Allen Libraries, which serve science, social science and humanities disciplines. In addition, we are in the process of developing a physical and virtual Research Commons that will provide access to collaboration space, quiet study and a range of information resources and services. Envisioning and creating the Research Commons will

require bringing together expertise from throughout the Libraries and our user communities. We would welcome your participation in describing the scope of services and resources to be offered in the Research Commons.

Once again, let me stress that our goal is to provide enhanced services and resources to the Physics Department even in the face of significant budget reductions. Your liaison, Pam Yorks, yorks@u.washington.edu, is ready to work with you to address your information needs and to answer any questions you may have. You are also welcome to contact Cynthia Fugate, Associate Dean for Research and Instruction Services (cfugate@u.washington.edu), for more information about our plans.