

University Libraries Committee Minutes

March 25, 2026

Present: Bruce Ayati, Anthony Panos, Nick Yablon, Matt Shadle, John Stevenson, Becky Wilson, Diane Huber and Mary Grace Elson - emeritus faculty council

Absent: Jose Fernandez— Chair, Luis Munoz, Katherine Yu, Isabella Jimenez Rodriquez, Kathit Patel

Staff: John Culshaw, Jack B. King University Librarian; Jade Davis, associate university librarian for teaching, learning, and research; Tracy Grimm, associate university librarian for distinctive collections; Sara Scheib, director; Jerome Kirby, director.

1. Culshaw shared several updates: current searches in the Libraries include the Hardin Library assistant university librarian and director, digital projects specialist, clinical education librarian, and a collections archivist in the Iowa Women's Archives. The Libraries is under internal audit this spring semester. Current facility projects include a renovation on the first floor for the Academic Resource Center and a refresh in the second floor corridor. One Day for Iowa today is highlighting our Student Success Fund.
2. Scheib returned to continue discussion on open access. Members noted what they have seen when researchers are blocked by paywalls and shared how they decided where to publish and how cost is a factor which can drive researchers to open access publishers.
3. Kirby shared updates on student success initiatives. In the Libraries, reducing library anxiety and making services more approachable—such as providing just-in-time support—remain key priorities. In the Learning Commons, staff are rethinking furniture, lighting, sound, and other environmental elements to better support how students use the space. Informal areas help foster conversation and engagement, while enrichment efforts—like makerspaces, stress-relief stations, and creative workshops—promote play, creativity, and resilience. These efforts align with campus strategic priorities and position the Libraries as part of the broader university safety net.

University Libraries Committee Minutes

February 6, 2026

Present: Jose Fernandez— Chair, Bruce Ayati, Anthony Panos, Luis Munoz, Nick Yablon, Matt Shadle, John Stevenson, Diane Huber - emeritus faculty council

Absent: Becky Wilson, Katherine Yu, Isabella Jimenez Rodriquez, Kathit Patel

Staff: John Culshaw, Jack B. King University Librarian; Karen Shemanski, senior HR director; Jade Davis, associate university librarian for teaching, learning, and research; Tracy Grimm, associate university librarian for distinctive collections; José Jiménez, director libraries IT; Amy Paulus, senior director; Sara Scheib, director.

1. Culshaw noted that our AUL for discovery and systems retired this past week and how to fill that role will be determined soon. The Libraries has updated their strategic plan that goes through 2027; this will be shared at an upcoming committee meeting.
2. Paulus shared updates on library finances and space. Staffing expenditures has increased due to positions to support strategic initiatives and improving retention. About 95% of our collection expenditure is for electronic resources. Noted that the Academic Resource Center will be moving to the first floor later this year. The second floor central corridor is currently being renovated to

provide better study space. We will be finding space for more special collections materials on the third floor and add instructional space for that department.

3. Jimenez demonstrated how to use [LibKey Nomad](#), a browser extension that makes it easier to navigate directly to the full text PDF of an article from our subscription databases.
4. Scheib discussed [open access for UI authors](#) which remove paywalls for researchers.

University Libraries Committee Minutes

December 3, 2025

Present: Jose Fernandez– Chair, Bruce Ayati, Anthony Panos, Luis Munoz, Nick Yablon, Matt Shadle, Isabella Jimenez Rodriquez, Becky Wilson, John Stevenson, Katherine Yu, Diane Huber - emeritus faculty council

Absent: Kathit Patel

Staff: John Culshaw, Jack B. King University Librarian; Karen Shemanski, senior HR director; Jade Davis, associate university librarian for teaching, learning, and research; Tracy Grimm, associate university librarian for distinctive collections; Anne Bassett, senior director strategic communications and external relations; José Jiménez, director libraries IT.

1. Culshaw mentioned recent meetings such as the center for research libraries board meeting, BTAA directors meeting; and the Together Hawkeyes event and Hawkeye Caucus in Washington DC.
2. Jiménez and Bassett shared information about the libraries' web redesign project. The project will reorganize and move web content from our current WordPress platform to the SiteNow platform to better meet the needs of students, faculty, staff, and the broader university community. This project will improve findability for web content, migrate to a university supported platform, and make overall user improvements for Libraries patrons. This project includes work to ensure compliance with Title II accessibility requirements.
3. Davis shared a concept plan to re-envision research support services by co-creating a Research Commons that aligns with the university's strategic priorities. The vision is to establish a centralized space where researchers can access comprehensive support and collaborate effectively, addressing the current challenge of services being distributed across multiple departments. Bringing these resources together will create a more integrated experience, support the full research lifecycle, enhance collaborations and partnerships across campus, and provide a unified service model that strengthens the university's research enterprise.
4. A draft topic list for spring semester was shared and members approved.

University Libraries Committee Minutes

October 22, 2025

Present: Jose Fernandez– Chair, Bruce Ayati, Luis Munoz, Nick Yablon, Matt Shadle, Isabella Jimenez Rodriquez, John Stevenson, Diane Huber - emeritus faculty council

Absent: Katherine Yu, Anthony Panos, Becky Wilson, Kathit Patel

Staff: John Culshaw, Jack B. King University Librarian; Karen Shemanski, senior HR director; Jade Davis, associate university librarian for teaching, learning, and research; Paul Soderdahl, associate university librarian for discovery and systems; Tracy Grimm, associate university librarian for distinctive collections; Amy Paulus, senior director, finance, facilities, and collection fulfillment.

1. Culshaw reported on the Association of Research Libraries meeting he attended earlier this month, where topics included the federal research situation, the shutdown, AI, and peer institutions facing difficult situations. He will be attending Hawkeye Caucus in Washington DC next week.
2. We are continuing progress on refreshing our strategic plan to align better with university priorities. Davis shared the plan's research and creative discovery goal and asked for the committee's feedback. How can space be innovative? Spaces should inspire the type of work we wish to see in the library. Are there things you wish, physically or digitally, to see in the libraries to inspire research and creative discovery? Noted: spaces with monitors and white boards are popular; digital humanities and scholarship centers are creative in that they collaborate through partnerships; one-stop shops are important, try to incorporate everything a researcher needs so that they can focus on their work.

Davis asked about effective ways to promote library services. Mentioned: Libraries website; take away promotional items that include QR codes; monthly newsletters with information/links; programs by researchers discussing how the library was valuable to them regarding resources, physical or electronic.

3. Paulus shared some financial and space history of library collections, as well as initiatives in the past 20 years that have moved libraries to establish cooperative agreements, shared repositories, and electronic delivery of research materials. These steps make it viable to move physical items out of library spaces so that the space can be put to better use. We currently have a need to expand shelving space for distinctive collections, which do not store well in our storage annex. We are beginning a project to review and identify our journals, specifically on the third floor, that can be withdrawn, thus providing space on the same floor for Special Collections & Archives materials. The library user will not see any change or disruption and the service level will remain the same in providing materials to the researcher. If there is a need to see the print copy, access would be available through interlibrary loan, in which we would request the copy being retained at the University of Illinois on behalf of the BTAA SPR.

Paulus also noted a new service that is currently being tested which provides almost instant access to journal articles. This service will not replace but instead augment our interlibrary loan services.

4. Reviewed the list of topics brainstormed at the last meeting to help rate topics for future meetings.

University Libraries Committee Minutes

September 10, 2025

Present: Jose Fernandez– Chair, Bruce Ayati, Luis Munoz, Nick Yablon, Anthony Panos, Becky Wilson, Kathit Patel, Isabella Jimenez Rodriquez, John Stevenson, Diane Huber - emeritus faculty council

Absent: Matt Shadle, Katherine Yu

Staff: John Culshaw, Jack B. King University Librarian; Jade Davis, associate university librarian for teaching, learning, and research; Paul Soderdahl, associate university librarian for discovery and systems; Tracy Grimm, associate university librarian for distinctive collections.

1. Members introduced themselves and shared their interest and reasons for volunteering for the charter committee.
2. The committee reviewed the charge and role of the group.
3. Culshaw shared information about current initiatives for the Libraries. There has been a small increase in traffic this semester as compared to last fall. The Libraries has been working on refreshing the strategic plan, making sure it is aligned with the university's, and this should be completed by the end of the year. Culshaw will bring the refreshed plan to the committee later this semester. The campus Academic Resource Center, a supplemental instruction program sponsored by the office of the provost, has moved to the main library building due to the IMU construction. It is currently on second floor but will be moved to a refreshed space on first. The sciences and engineering libraries have been merged under one leader. Finally, we are remediating our web presence to account for new federal directives on accessibility and embarking on a project to move our web platform to the campus standard (Drupal). Davis noted she is working on an interim leadership plan for the Hardin Library since the recent search failed.
4. Fernandez shared that he has been working with John and Karen to make this group more meaningful and to increase engagement. It is important to learn about the libraries so that members can be better advocates.

The group brainstormed possible topics for the coming year: Student reps would like to share comments they have heard from others: some students are interested in reserving rooms but also having an office in the library; interest in collaborating with Hardin library to establish a 3-D printing lab (Davis noted some environmental issues of that building so MakerSpaces could be a larger discussion); undergraduate study room checkouts not well known as well as other spaces in the building (advertise on social media? more signage?); have more whiteboards throughout the building; library space overview; director of strategic comms and our communication strategies; paywalls for researchers, digital resources; in-person meeting and a tour of student spaces; promote things better such as LibKey Nomad; future of digital studio.