2CUL
The Columbia University Libraries/Information Services
Cornell University Library
(Grant Reference # 41200629)

1. Objectives

In January 2013, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation awarded a grant of $350,000 to the Cornell University Library for use over a three-year period to support two key objectives of the Columbia/Cornell initiative (2CUL) associated with integrating technical services operations. The terms of this initiative are outlined in detail in the proposal submitted by Anne R. Kenney and James G. Neal in their letter of September 12, 2012 and Thomas H. Frank's letter on the same date, both addressed to Donald J. Waters.

With Mellon's support, the two key goals of this project were:
1. Reconceive separate library operations at each campus to achieve integration across both campuses by realigning staff responsibilities, workflows, and reporting lines to reflect an integrated operation; and
2. Ensure that all technical services staff on both campuses understand and embrace 2CUL as an institutional goal and view inter-institutional collaboration as part of normal library operations.

As reported last year, the logistics of this effort were more complex than originally anticipated. In a meeting with Donald Waters on November 7, 2014, Anne Kenney and Jim Neal reviewed progress on the project as well as challenges involving cultural differences at the university level, union restrictions, and institutional limits on access to each other's financial systems as well as delays in purchasing a shared library management system. These obstacles limit the development of deep collaboration and creation of a new cross-institutional organizational structure. For this reason, the two libraries redirected staff effort from focusing on integration (TSI) to specific collaborations between the two Library Technical Services units.

2. Deliverables

At the end of 2014, we announced the following reformulated deliverables by the end of the project in December 2015:
- A formal alliance of technical services operations to expand expertise and generate cost savings through select shared workflows, collaborative projects, and a robust consultative culture. Qualitative improvements in service and support for the collections, as well as savings and cost avoidance will be assessed at the conclusion of the project.
- Staff support for 2CUL as an important component of technical services for both libraries, evaluated by the range of collaborative activities; staff surveys assessing readiness, preparedness, and attitudes; and the inclusion of 2CUL participation in relevant job descriptions and performance reviews.
- Presentations and publications to keep the research library community informed.

3. Accomplishments

The following summarizes the progress made in meeting the goals for TSI during the third (and final) year of the project, January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015.

Goal 1: Reconceive separate library operations at each campus to achieve integration across both campuses by realigning staff responsibilities, workflows, and reporting lines to reflect an integrated operation.

As indicated above, significant obstacles to operational integration led the libraries to re-imagine TSI as a Technical Services "Initiative" in mid-2014. To this end, we modified the project's original first goal to reconceive library operations at each campus to achieve a formal alliance of technical services operations to expand expertise and generate cost savings through select shared workflows, collaborative projects, and a robust consultative culture. Two most significant accomplishments were: better decision-making and successful leverage of the 2CUL brand name in negotiation with material vendors that gained an estimated $200,000 in projected collective savings for the partner institutions.

TSI continued development of the collaborative relationship between the libraries' e-resources units in 2015. After migrating Cornell staff to ProQuest's 360 Resource Manager System in 2014, the two libraries upgraded to the same vendor's Intota e-resource management system in the fall of 2015. In doing so, the libraries were able to receive a vendor discount of approximately $5,000 by participating in the training program together in New York City. While these savings were nearly offset by travel costs for Cornell staff, the experience of working together from the inception of Intota implementation contributes to the two units' mutual understanding of each other's workflows, the evolving software environment in which we develop new workflows and solve problems. Our experience reinforced the understanding that e-resource trouble-shooting is institutional-specific. Cross-institutional solution by two separate staff units does not generate efficiency. Sharing troubleshooting reports via Intota, however, has been useful in diagnosing website outages and system-wide failures, which in turn leads to better service for our respective user communities. Further, the libraries' coordinated implementation of the Callisto e-resource access tracking system not only saves the 2CUL libraries some $1,000 annually but is helping us with joint diagnostics as well. Finally, we developed principles and policies for negotiating with material vendors to ensure maximum leverage for the collaboration. This has, in fact, been the most fruitful area of TSI. 2CUL e-resources staff, in cooperation with 2CUL collection development officers, have successfully pursued joint negotiations with content and service providers during the grant period, leading to the estimated $200,000 in projected collective savings noted above.

Along with four other major libraries, Columbia and Cornell will be working together on the Mellon-funded Linked Data for Production (LD4P) project. The first phase of this initiative will focus on development of our ability to produce linked open metadata communally and the enhancement of the BIBFRAME ontology to encompass the multiple resource formats that academic libraries process. As part of our ongoing 2CUL partnership, Cornell will be supporting Columbia's shared use of Cornell's Vitro linked data editing tool for the project. In addition, we expect that 2CUL project staff (some of whom have already collaborated on TSI) will share insights and solve problems together as this work progresses.

2CUL non-MARC metadata staff began joint Metadata Working Group forums as a result of the TSI project. Last year and as a result of one of those forums, Columbia and Cornell staff began exchanging information and insights regarding the development of Columbia's "Promoting Access to Research and Collaboration" project and Scholars@Cornell, two local initiatives aimed at linking scholars and research information. The close working relationship among the 2CUL non-MARC metadata staff has also led to joint contributions to the development of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Controlled Vocabularies, with Cornell now hosting a test instance in support of this effort. Although Columbia provided early guidance

to Cornell in developing its web archiving program in technical services, differences in collection focus preclude further collaboration at this time.

On the staff's and skills' front, we had a number of benefits, for example:
- The libraries' continued use of the automated Pre-Order Online Form (POOF!), developed at Cornell, but with considerable input from Columbia – a tool we estimate is saving us, collectively, as much as two FTE annually.
- A single Columbia cataloger represents 2CUL's joint interest in the PCC's Cooperative Online Serials Program (CONSER).
- Several search committees for professional positions in technical services included representatives from both Columbia and Cornell.
- Columbia and Cornell technical services are now frequently recognized nationally as 2CUL, an allied status that may very well lead to greater influence in matters of mutual interest – such as PCC initiatives (on which the two cataloging groups are now regularly consulting, if not formally collaborating) and aspects of linked data research and development (such as sharing server and tool space for the proposed, Mellon-sponsored LD4P project, including joint testing of the BIBFRAME model for bibliographic data exchange).

Finally, with help from serials management staff, the TSI managers conducted an in-depth study of print serials processing at the two institutions. To do this, the 2CUL TSI project managers conducted interviews with key print serials staff at both institutions to elicit additional details regarding workflow, estimated effort (FTE), levels of staffing, and perceptions about what works well and what could be improved for print serials processing. They then measured this input against statistical reports on the total number of print serials ordered, received, claimed, and cataloged during the most recent fiscal year to derive staff production ratios for various functional categories. Comparison of these ratios generated more granular insights into the similarities and differences between the two institutions in regard to productivity. We concluded print serials workflow is significantly driven by local use preference, making it an area where it is not ideal to collaborate currently. But the same analytical method could be used to investigate other functional areas.

Goal 2: Ensure that all technical services staff on both campuses understand and embrace 2CUL as an institutional goal and view inter-institutional collaboration as part of normal library operations.

The TSI project managers continued to issue "Occasional Progress Reports" quarterly throughout 2015. These reports focused exclusively on the progress, milestones, evolution, and goals of the project, and served to supplement the more general 2CUL progress reports issued by senior staff at both institutions. In addition, project planners continued the use of a TSI listserv to communicate with all 2CUL technical services staff and a project wiki for sharing and archiving project information.

With the help of library assessment staff at both institutions, TSI planners issued a follow-up to the 2014 TSI survey to technical services staff. While the survey was distributed to all central technical services staff at Cornell, union issues once again limited its distribution at Columbia to non-union staff. This survey was originally intended to measure perceptions of technical services *integration*, in conjunction with individuals' satisfaction with their current units and libraries. Although the libraries made the decision not to integrate after the initial survey was distributed, TSI planners felt that this re-assessment of attitudes, perception, and satisfaction would still be useful for a better understanding of the evolving climate for collaboration within 2CUL and beyond. Six areas were again measured: innovation, collaboration, efficiency, communication, decision-making, and risk-taking. Respondents overall thought

that the TSI initiative was a bold, optimistic idea, but the fact that the libraries had underestimated the effort required to execute the project added to continued doubt about the project gains. Despite this sentiment, it appears that attitudes and perceptions regarding their own units and their own library (Cornell or Columbia) remain almost unchanged from the first survey to the second, but staff are more satisfied than they anticipated they would be when answering the initial survey in 2014. "Collaboration" was the first-impression term staff most often associated with TSI in the survey. Unit risk-taking has shown the biggest gain.

Input from senior managers within the two technical services operations reflects this apparent shift in cultural awareness and values, as well. As a group, they view positively the natural, productive, and intellectual engagement that has developed within the TSI Joint Senior Managers Integration Network (JSMIN) and some of the TSI functional working groups. There is general agreement among TSI planners that having a wider group of colleagues available for consultation and joint examination of issues is useful and worth continuing. Moreover, this increased comfort with the idea of collaboration and risk-taking, fostered through the TSI project, has given leaders within 2CUL technical services the sense of having earned a kind of "license to collaborate" – not only with each other, but with other institutions as well.

2CUL also had positive impact on collection development, research support, system adoption, and preservation—all of which are integral parts of our libraries' operations but fall outside of the scope of this grant. Some of the work on the collection development front has been documented in *Library Consortia: Models for Collaboration and Sustainability* by Anne Kenney and Jim Neal (see Publications). The decision on when and which library management system to adopt is another example. This decision was informed by the analysis of a team with representatives from library IT, public services, technical services, and library financial services from both Cornell and Columbia Libraries. Although the resulting action differs between Cornell and Columbia, the quality of the decision was better than either library could have made alone. The system vendor, Ex Libris has told us that the earlier, extensive 2CUL Project Scoping Analysis had a significant and positive impact on Alma's functionality development. We believe they will benefit libraries who implement Alma. Nationally, 2CUL has influenced peer institutions in starting their own shared-selector's service model as well as the reciprocal onsite borrowing privilege among the Borrow Direct partners.

4. Challenges

Given the continuing obstacles to actual integration – cultural differences at the university level, union restrictions at Columbia, and limits on access to each other's financial systems – a "virtual" integration would mean operating two administratively, culturally, and legally separate library divisions, plus a 2CUL entity spanning the two operations for parts that could be done jointly. The cost would outweigh any savings gained from efficiencies achieved in merging workflows. This is especially true in the wake of Cornell's decision to join the Kuali partnership and implement its OLE library management system in 2018, while Columbia remains committed to the Voyager ILS. As we noted in the original grant proposal, the full benefits of TSI "will only be realized when we are able to implement a common library management system that itself integrates data and workflows now occurring through separate software components ("Building an Integrated 2CUL Technical Services Operation," submitted to The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, 12 September 2012, p. 7).

5. Project Personnel

There has been one significant change in the staffing plan for the project. Ann D. Thornton, Columbia's new Vice Provost and University Librarian, replaced Damon E. Jaggars on June 1, 2015 as Columbia's Principal Investigator for the project and co-chair of the 2CUL Steering Committee. Jaggars remained on the 2CUL Steering Committee through the remainder of the year, but left Columbia to become the Vice Provost and Director of University Libraries at the Ohio State University in early 2016.

6. Intellectual Property

There are no intellectual property agreements associated with this project.

7. Future Plans

With the conclusion of our three-year investigation into the possibility and limits of technical services integration within 2CUL – planning and research funded with the generous support of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation – the Columbia and Cornell University Libraries formally mainstreamed their technical services collaboration as a "2CUL Technical Services Strategic Alliance," beginning in January 2016. The goals of this alliance are:
- To work together on discrete projects and initiatives of mutual strategic interest, whenever collaboration is likely to lead to better overall quality, productivity, improvement of services, and/or fruitful innovation than working alone;
- To preserve, promote, and invoke the 2CUL brand in broader collaborative forums (e.g. Borrow Direct, LD4P, the Program for Cooperative Cataloging), in which the 2CUL alliance is likely to serve as a catalyst or provide us with increased leverage in negotiating and advancing mutual interests;
- To maintain a lightweight administrative infrastructure to foster and support the continuing alliance between our technical services operations, in conjunction with the broader 2CUL partnership.

Towards these ends, the 2CUL Technical Services Joint Senior Managers Integration Network (JSMIN), a group made up of the department directors within both institutions' technical services divisions, will remain in place to foster and monitor the alliance. This group will meet quarterly (or as needed) via WebEx and annually at either Columbia or Cornell, pending significant agendas. JSMIN will continue to report to the 2CUL Steering Committee.

The TSI functional working groups, originally constituted to plan and implement technical services integration at the unit level, will remain in place, although those teams not actively involved in 2CUL projects, initiatives, or other arrangements will consider themselves on hiatus until the need for their renewed participation in the partnership arises. The formation of ad hoc working groups and teams will continue to be encouraged and supported, as opportunities for fruitful collaboration materialize. New staff will be incorporated into existing working groups, as appropriate. Both the functional and ad hoc working groups will be accountable to JSMIN or to the appropriate technical services directors within JSMIN.

Although the project failed to achieve its original goal of deep operational integration, those who have been extensively involved in the project now have a far better sense than they did three years ago about what can and cannot be done, and at what cost, by large research libraries in similar legal,

administrative, and geographical circumstances as those of 2CUL. To this end, the two TSI managers will be preparing for publishing the third in a series of articles detailing the project later in 2016. This paper will not only summarize the developments that occurred and insights achieved during the third year of the project, but will look back over the duration of the initiative to draw general conclusions about the achievements and challenges our peer libraries should expect when approaching their own prospects for deep and enduring collaboration with other partnering libraries and institutions. We also expect to present and continue to discuss our experiences with 2CUL TSI at the ALA Annual Conference in Orlando in June 2016.

On the library-level, Cornell and Columbia will continue the 2CUL collaboration through formal engagement on key issues or opportunistically. Some action items include: 2CUL as thought-leader/catalyst to develop joint position statements/white papers, and seed larger groups such as Borrow Direct or Ivy Plus. We plan to explore issues together, such as vendor engagement on licensing principles and born-digital preservation/archiving. We will explore the possibility of involving other partners beyond Columbia and Cornell in key areas of vital importance to research libraries, such as reputation management, international engagement, online education/blended learning, 21-century literacy etc. The 2CUL Steering Committee will continue to be the decision-making body and will meet online once a year in the future. The Associate University Librarians and functional leads will continue to stay in regular contact.

8. Financial Narrative

The subcontract to Columbia was underspent by $1,405. Funding had been reserved to pay Proquest for a joint onsite training on the new Intota system used by 2CUL to manage e-resources. Final invoicing was not received by the end of the project; if necessary, these costs will be covered by Columbia using non-project funds.

Submitted,

Anne R. Kenney
Carl A. Kroch University Librarian
Cornell University Library

3/22/2016