



To: Wendy Martin, Assistant Director of Stewardship, UT Libraries

From: Douglas Dempster, Dean, College of Fine Arts 

Subject: Fine Arts Library Task Force

Date: December 7, 2017

Copy: Provost Maurie McInnis; Lorraine Haricombe; FAL Task Force committee

Thank you for agreeing to chair the task force to study the future management of the Fine Arts Library collection. I look forward to receiving the task force's report in April.

My charge to the task force is not to make a decision about the future disposition and location of the Fine Arts Library collection, but to outline a range of feasible scenarios—and the merits and demerits of those options—for ensuring continued, ready access to a continually growing, well-preserved collection.

The College of Fine Arts community of students, scholars and artists puts an enormously high value on building, retaining, and having access to an excellent teaching and research collection. That needs to be both a necessary assumption and the ultimate goal of your study.

- The college expects the best and most complete collection affordable—in all relevant media—that serves the research, teaching, and learning needs of our faculty, students, and community.
- We wish for library materials to be readily, rapidly, and reliably accessible with liberal hours.
- While we understand that no existing space is large enough to house the entire collection, our community puts a high value on having collections that can be accessed in “open stacks.”
- Quiet study space, strong technology support, and access to librarians with discipline-specific expertise are also strongly desired.

At the same time, circulation of materials from and visits to the collection in the Fine Arts Library has declined dramatically over 20 years, and continues to do so. We understand that CoFA and UT must be responsive to changing trends in the nature of scholarly collections, associated research methodologies, and evolving pedagogical practices. The College of Fine Arts also needs to make and plan for optimal uses of the precious facilities available to us.

I will not prescribe the exact work of your task force beyond asking you to consider a diverse range of scenarios that address the needs of the college. I will also ask you to be generous in inviting input from across the College of Fine Arts and in sharing what you learn about the collection.

Realizing the challenges in this undertaking, I want to thank you again for serving as chair of the task force.